

[Martin V. Corn]

Redfield, Georgia B.

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MARTIN V. CORN

Founder of Largest Family of Chaves County

Planted Trees of Lovers' Lane

Pat Garrett - Billy the Kid - Ollinger - Bell

Martin V. Corn, and his wife and seven children came to the Territory of New Mexico in 1879. They came in a covered wagon caravan with seven other stockmen and their families.

The men of the caravan who shared the expenses and responsibilities of the journey, were Bill and Ed Hudson, Bill Holloman, Lon Spencer, Ike Tooters, and a man by the name of Horn who drove the cattle and was leader of the caravan.

While it was a long tiresome journey across the dry treeless plains and especially trying on the women, there were camp pleasures shared by all members of the caravan in frequent stops, and around camp fires in the cool of the evenings, when they would tell stories of adventure and sing rollicking songs and hymns. The children played games and explored around, but never ventured far from sight of the men who were prepared to protect their families with six-shooters and Winchesters kept loaded and close at hand in case of sudden attack by hostile Indians.

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While other stockmen lost entire herds, that were driven away by the Indians, and even teams used by some travelers for their wagons were stolen, the caravan of which Mr. Corn was a member, lost nothing, because of their preparedness against attack.

Children or Mr. Corn's now grown and heads of families, tell interesting stories of incidents of that caravan journey. At the beginning of the never-to-be-forgotten trip they had their first tin-type pictures 2 taken, and at the end; tragedy overtook them after they made camp at old Seven Rivers, Nearly all the men had gone on to Roswell and Lincoln prospecting, when the man left in charge got in a quarrel and Ike Tooters was killed by one of the Hudson brothers which caused much excitement and furnished a victim for the widely known "Boot Cemetery" at Seven Rivers where many murdered men were buried with boots on.

Mr. Corn on arriving at South Spring five miles southeast of Roswell was favorably impressed with that section of the country as being what he desired for stock raising, and farming.

John Chisum had established the Jingle Bob Rancho at the head of South Spring River and had built a comfortable twelve room adobe home. Between fifteen and twenty thousand head of Chisum cattle, marked with the dangling ear bob, roamed the unfenced plains for hundreds of miles, and fed on fine grazing lands of the Pecos River Valley.

Roswell then, with its two Adobe buildings, the store and hotel, both owned by Captain Joseph C. Lea, was no more inviting than the country around South Spring where Mr. Corn decided to remain.

He took out homestead and timber culture claims, just north of the Chisum holdings, and later bought adjoining land, making 384 acres in one tract.

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During the fall of 1879 Mr. Corn, A. O. Spencer, Bill Holloman, and James H. Hampton took out the old Texas Irrigation Ditch from South Spring River, below the Chisum Ranch. The irrigated soil proved very productive.

In 1890 John Chisum went to Mr. Corn one day, and said, "Corn I'll make you a proposition, if you will set out trees along your ditch I'll get the trees, for we need then for shade on these hot dry plains."

3

Mr. Chisum, on securing Mr. Corn's agreement to his proposition, sent two ox wagons to Alpine, Texas, in the Davis Mountains, and got the cottonwood and willow tress. Mr. Corn set them out on the south side of the lane and Oregon Bell on the north side, on land he owned and afterwards sold to John W. Poe and is now L. F. D. Ranche of the J. P. White estate. The trees grew and Mr. Corn and his daughter Mary and their old darky servant called "Nigger Dick", cared for them and set out prunings until the beautiful lane extended for over a mile, from east to west, and has been a beauty spot and favorite drive for young people, especially lovers, for nearly sixty years.

It was told by J. P. White just before his death, that of all the tho'usands of cattle he drove thro'ugh the lane, not one ever injured the trees that were so carefully tended and watched by the Corn family.

After John W. Poe introduced and successfully raised alfalfa in the valley Mr. Corn procured seed and soon there were wide green fields growing on the south side of "Lovers Lane". One of the first apple orchards was also planted on 20 acres and first prizes and blue ribbons were awarded Mr. Corn on all the early displays of pioneer farm, garden, and orchard crops.

Three hundred head of cattle and a hundred head of horses brought from Texas by him, multiplied and grew fat on the fine grazing lands. He loved horses. The splendid horse

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named “ Black Hat for Mr. Corn was one he sold to Pat Garrett and was used by Billy the Kid when he shot Ollinger and Bell and made his escape from jail in Lincoln where he was held for execution for the murder of Sheriff Brady. Pat Garrett contracted to make the adobes and walls for the Corn home which is still standing, and can be seen just south of Lovers Lane. While the family waited for the home to be built Mr. and Mrs. Corn and the seven children lived in a dugout and one tent. For a while they lived in a sod house on the banks of the creek (South Spring River)

4

In 1881 the Corn children attended school in the first adobe school building three miles east of Roswell on East Second Street which was taught by Asbury C. Rogers. They afterwards attended the school taught by Miss Sara Lund (now Mrs. C. D. Bonney) who was teacher in the larger building built in 1885, a half a mile southeast of Roswell.

In 1893 Mr. Corn sold his 384 acres farm to J. J. Hagerman and in 1894 he established the ranche home “Eden Valley” twenty miles north of Roswell, where he spent the last years of his life, and where after his death at the age of seventy-six years, he was buried, as he had requested.

Mr. Corn was born in North Carolina. When he was a small child he moved with his parents to Kerr County, Texas where he was educated and on April 23, 1867 was married to Mary Jane Hampton.

The children born to this marriage were: Zelpha (deceased), Mary, [Manty?] (deceased), Eva, and Sally, and four boys, John Robert, Mart, and George (now deceased) who was born in New Mexico.

Mr. Corn after the death of his first wife, Mary Hampton Corn, was married on October 14, [1886?] to Julia McVicker.

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The children born of this second marriage were three girls and eight boys, namely: Minnie, May, and Lillian, and Waid, Lee, Charlie, Jess, Roe, Hub, Poe, and Clarence, making nineteen in all. There was one step-son Jim Hampton (deceased), son of Mary (Hampton) Corn, who was raised as one of the family of Corn children.

John R., Robert L., Martin V., and George, sons of Mr. Corn, all established and developed large ranches and other sheep and cattle ranches are scattered over hundreds of miles of Southeast New Mexico.

It is a standing joke among the Corn men that no matter how high an education any of them have received for a professional career, they all return to ranche life in the end.

The family has multiplied rapidly, and has very materially increased 5 the population of this section of New Mexico.

In the outstanding event: Old Timers' Parade of Eastern New Mexico State Fair, the Corn family is always largely represented in the interesting section of "Crops Raised in New Mexico".

Considering the conceded fact that, "Martin V. Corn was the founder of the largest family of worthy and respected citizens of which Chaves County can boast", and that they have proved, important factors in the progress and development of Roswell and the Pecos Valley it is fitting that all names of the grandchildren and great grandchildren as well as those of the children be given here. They are listed below:

The grandchildren of Mr. Corn and Mary (Hampton) Corn- Children of Mary Elizabeth Corn (Mrs. Ed Hudson) are: Archie, Steve, Carl (deceased), Edna (deceased), Mildred, Bessie, James, Lulu, and Martin.

Great grandchildren of Mr. Corn and Mary (Hampton) Corn - Children of Archie: Evelyn, Elizabeth, Margaret, Willis, Mildred, Clayton, Norma, and Well. Children of Steve: Lester

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and Merritt. Children of Carl: One son, Harold. Children of Edna: Donald and Wilma. Children of James: one girl, Loyse. Children of Lulu: Jack and Barbara. Children of Martin: Lera and Lela (twins) and a boy, Leon.

Great great grandchildren of Mr. Corn and Mary (Hampton) Corn - Great grandchildren of Mary Elizabeth Hudson: Children of Evelyn: Gerald, James, Laurel, and Clyde. Children of Elizabeth: Dunward and Charles.

Grandchildren of Mr. Corn and Mary (Hampton) Corn - Children of Minty Corn (Mrs. Charles Ballard) are Syble, Mabel, Willie Buck (Deceased), Theodore, Jack and Katherine.

Great grandchildren of Mr. Corn and Mary (Hampton) Corn - Children of Syble: one girl, Irene. Children of Mabel: one girl, Christina. Children of Theodore: one boy, Theodore Jr. Children of Katherine: one girl, Patsy.

Great great grandchildren of Mr. Corn and Mary (Hampton) Corn - Great Grandchildren of Minty Corn Ballard: Children of Irene: one son, Norman.

6

Children of John Roland Corn: Ester and Pauline.

Grandchildren of Mr. Corn and Mary (Hampton) Corn - Children of Robert Lafayette and Maggie (Bowden) Corn: Fred, Fayette (deceased), Richard, Irwin, Alton, and Ronald and Donald (twins).

Great grandchildren of Mr. Corn and Mary (Hampton) Corn - Grandchildren of Robert Lafayette and Maggie (Bowden) Corn. Children of Fred: Regene, Robert, Fred Jr., and Billy. Children of Richard are: Dick and Marlene. Children of Irwin: one girl, Barbara. Children of Alton: Graham and Marilyn.

Grandchildren of Mr. Corn and Mary (Hampton) Corn - Children of Martin Jr., and Myrtle (Stewart) Corn: Earl, Hazel, and Ted (deceased). Great Grandchildren - Children of Earl:

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Elinor Jean, and Katherine. Children of Eva Corn (Mrs. Will Morrow are: Rosaline, Carson, Ralph, Chester, Roy John, Kitty (deceased), Dorothy, and Mary.

Great great grandchildren of Mr. Corn and Mary (Hampton) Corn - Grandchildren of Eva Corn Morrow. Children of Rosaline: William, Evelyn, Sammy, and Eugene. Children of Carson: Pearl and Hazel, Children of Ralph: Audrey and Wayne. Children of Chester: one boy Arthur. Children of Roy (deceased) three: Betty, June, and Maxene. Children of Dorothy: one girl, Nancy Lee. Children of Mary, one boy, Robert. Children of Sally Corn Pearson (Mrs. Will Pearson) one boy named Lilliard. George born after coming to New Mexico had two children, Lola and Curtis and one grandchild, Lola Nell.

Grandchildren of Mr. Corn and Julia (McVicker) Corn, Children of Minnie Corn (Mrs. Walker Snyder): Elizabeth, Frank, and Earl. Children of May Corn (Mrs. C. A. Marley): Inez (deceased) and Clyde. Children of Inez, one boy Bert. Children of Clyde, Francis Kay and Robert.

7

Children of Waid and Grace (Garrett) Corn: Clark Garrett (deceased), Waid Jr., and Billy. Children of Lee and Alice (Alexander) Corn: Martin and Harold. Children of Charlie and Dorothy (Gifford) Corn: One daughter, Sandra. Children of Jess and Ruth (Huff) Corn: Laura Ruth, and Bronson. Children of Clarence and Dora (Richardson) Corn: one boy, Edwin. Children of Poe and Margery (Rollins) Corn: Betty Jane, and Rollins. Children of Jim Hampton (Stepson of Mr. Corn, son of Mary Hampton Corn) and Ella (Meek) Corn: one daughter Burr. Children of Burr: one daughter Fay Jeanette.

Sources of Information

Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Corn - Roswell, New Mexico Mrs. May (Corn) Marley - Roswell, New Mexico

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Lucius Dills - Roswell New Mexico